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SUBJECT: UN DPKO A/SYG MULET: UNAMID NOT MAKING PROGRESS IN
DARFUR

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for Reasons 1.4 B/D.

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: Assistant Secretary General Edmond Mulet told the Security Council in a March 11 briefing that the UN has not been able to make significant progress on any of the three tracks of the Darfur peace process. Mulet reported that the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) had launched a large-scale assault on rebel controlled towns in western Darfur in late February. Subsequent Security Council discussion focused on the need to look for a way forward given that the current "strategy" to end the Darfur conflict is not working. END SUMMARY.

Mulet: No Progress on Peace Process,
Deployment, Humanitarian Tracks

¶2. (U) During an initial open briefing to the Security Council and interested delegations on March 11, Assistant Secretary General Edmond Mulet said that the UN has not been

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able to make significant progress on the political, security or humanitarian tracks of the Darfur peace process. Mulet reported a significant deterioration in security conditions in west Darfur during the last several weeks. He said the Sudanese Armed Forces have returned to coordinated attacks using janjaweed militias, air power and ground forces during recent attacks on the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) strongholds in Jebel Moon, Sirba and Suleia. Mulet commented that these attacks showed that the Government of the Sudan is still "committed to seeking a military solution" and that the heightened violence has caused numerous civilians deaths and tens of thousands of new displacements.

¶3. (U) Regarding the political process, Mulet noted that the most powerful political/rebel leaders, the JEM-Khalil Ibrahim and the SLA-Abdul Wahid, remained outside the political process. He said that, despite the best effort of the UN and AU Special Envoys, little progress had been made towards establishing a unified rebel position or joint negotiating team, leaving little possibility that substantive negotiations would begin soon. Mulet said the intense political divisions within the Government of National Unity and the ongoing SAF attacks gave the rebels reason to question Khartoum's readiness for substantive talks.

¶4. (U) In regard to UNAMID deployment, Mulet highlighted several areas of ongoing difficulties in efforts to fully

deploy an effective peacekeeping force: insecurity, inconsistent levels of cooperation from the GOS, logistical constraints, and force shortfalls. As of March 10, Mulet said UNAMID's total strength was 9,178 uniformed personnel, nearly all of whom were originally part of AMIS (NOTE: The UN has only deployed 294 additional peacekeepers since the December 31 Transfer of Authority. END NOTE.) Mulet said it would be "several months" before UNAMID has significantly improved military capabilities on the ground. He said "it is absolutely critical that incoming troops be self-sustaining."

Mulet noted the ongoing equipment delays, reporting that it took the UN seven weeks to move equipment for the Chinese and Bangladeshi units from Port Sudan to Darfur because of bureaucratic hindrances by the Sudanese.

UNSC Discussion
Focused on Solutions

15. (U) Following A/SYG Mulet's downbeat briefing on the current situation in Darfur, Security Council delegations reconvened for closed consultations. UKUN AMB John Sawers commented that Mulet's briefing demonstrated that "the current international strategy is not delivering the results we intended" and the Security Council needed to acknowledge that fact and begin discussions on the way forward. Sawers proposed that interested delegations take up "informal discussions" focused on what can be done to move forward on resolving the Darfur crisis. AMB Khalilzad said that "several indicators demonstrate that the situation in Darfur is headed in the wrong direction" and the Security Council needed to begin a more serious dialogue on how to improve the situation. France, South Africa, Belgium, Costa Rica, Burkina Faso and Croatia concurred on the need for a strategic dialogue on Darfur.

16. (U) Chinese PermRep Wang and Libyan PermRep Ettalhi

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concluded that the latest SYG report on UNAMID deployment was discouraging, but emphasized that progress had also been made recently in finalizing the Status of Forces Agreement and some associated issues with the deployment. Wang acknowledged that the situation was "frustrating" and noted that the PRC has expressed its concern to the GOS. Wang argued that enhanced engagement with the Sudanese leadership was the best way to improve the situation on the ground and emphasized that progress on the humanitarian and security tracks was dependent on first establishing a meaningful political process and that the rebel leaders bore the primary responsibility for the lack of progress in that area. Russian PermRep Churkin said that any "comparative analysis" of rebel and government responsibility indicated that both sides shared blame, but that the rebels in particular had taken "provocative actions." Churkin noted that "some delegations" had spoken in favor of sanctions in the past, but have largely been "silent on taking action" against rebel leaders. Churkin argued that if the Security Council was sincerely interested in making progress in Darfur than it would seriously consider sanctioning rebel leaders who remained outside the political process.

17. (C) Churkin complained that "certain members of the Security Council" had established the Friends of UNAMID Group without consulting adequately with other delegations or establishing a reporting relationship with the Security Council, "No one has told the Russian delegation anything about this initiative." UKUN AMB Sawers added that the UK was not consulted either. (COMMENT: The Friends Group is a coordination body for major donors to UNAMID. Since Russia is not a major donor, it has not been included for this reason. The UK participated actively in the planning for the first meeting and UK Special Envoy Michael O'Neill traveled to New York to participate in the inaugural session. It was not clear to USUN why AMB Sawers was not fully aware of this

initiative. END COMMENT.)

KHALILZAD